

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CONAKR 00043 061538Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 INT-05 /024 W
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R 061506Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3877
INFO AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: EMIN, GV
SUBJECT: GUINEAN DIAMOND MINING PLANS

REF: 77 STATE 270864

1. GOG HAS ATTEMPTED TO GENERATE INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN EXPLOITATION OF DIAMOND DEPOSITS IN GUINEA'S FOREST REGION (IN AREA ROUGHLY BOUNDED BY LINE CONNECTING KISSIDOUYOU, GUECKEDOU, MACENTA AND KEROUANE). AS DEPOSITS HAVE NOT BEEN WORKED ON COMMERCIAL SCALE IN RECENT YEARS, FEASIBILITY STUDY IS FIRST STEP. INTERESTED PARTIES ARE TWO US FIRMS (DDI, INC., AND LEON TEMPLESMAN & SON), AND ENGLISH FIRM, AND EASTERN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS (E.G., ROMANIANS AND BULGARIANS. USSR DID GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF DEPOSITS SOME YEARS AGO WITHOUT FOLLOW-ON). ONE US FIRM IS CONSIDERING LINKS TO FRENCH CONSTRUCTION FIRM OPERATING IN GUINEA, JEAN LEFEBVRE. JEAN LEFEBVRE, WELL KNOWN LOCALLY, IS SAID TO HAVE "EXCESS" SYLIS, SHOULD HAVE NECESSARY CONTACTS IN GOG AND RESOURCES (LODGING, EARTHMOVING EQUIPMENT, DRILLING) ON LOCATION OR CLOSE TO IT WHICH COULD MAKE LEFEBVRE AN ADEQUATE LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE.

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2. DDI BROUGHT TECHNICAL TEAM TO GUINEA IN DECEMBER 1977 TO SURVEY SITE AREA. THEY WERE ENCOURAGED BY GEOLOGICAL FACTORS INDICATING POTENTIAL COMMERCIALY PRODUCTIVE DIAMOND DEPOSITS (I.E., PRESENCE OF GARNETS AND FORMATIONS SIMILAR TO SIERRA LEONE DEPOSITS). ONE MEMBER OF GROUP WHO IS DDI DIAMOND BUYING REP IN SIERRA LEONE STATED THAT HE BELIEVED LARGE PORTION

OF SIERRA LEONE DIAMOND PRODUCTION WAS REALLY GUINEAN IN ORIGIN. DESPITE OFFICIAL EFFORTS AGAINST INDIVIDUAL DIAMOND PROSPECTING, TECHNICAL TEAM SAW EVIDENCE OF SUCCESSFUL PROSPECTERS IN AREA OF MAIN DEPOSITS.

3. DEPOSITS ARE OF TWO TYPES, ALLUVIAL DIAMONDS AND THOSE EMBEDDED IN KIMBERLITE PIPES; ALLUVIAL DEPOSITS ARE PROBABLY MOST ECONOMIC. DIAMONDS ARE EXPECTED TO BE 60-70 PERCENT GEM QUALITY, 40-30 PERCENT INDUSTRIAL QUALITY AND OF GOOD SIZE. PROJECT INVESTMENT WOULD BE \$10-15 MILLION DEPENDING ON TYPE AND EXTENT OF EXPLOITATION.

4. GOG APPEARS ANXIOUS TO HASTEN EXPLOITATION. GOG HAS TOLD ONE US FIRM THAT IT DOES NOT SEE NEED FOR EXTENSIVE FEASIBILITY STUDY, ALTHOUGH MINISTRY OF MINES OFFICIALS NOW SEEM MORE FLEXIBLE. POST HAS IMPRESSION FROM MINISTRY OF MINES OFFICIAL THAT GOG PLANS TO TAKE STRONGER HAND IN DIAMOND-MINING PROJECT THAN IN LARGER MINERALS PROJECTS IN GUINEA.

5. REFTTEL WAS FIRST NOTICE TO EMBASSY OF POTENTIAL INTEREST BY TEMPLESMAN FIRM, WHICH IS SECOND INTERESTED US FIRM. EMBASSY HAS NOT HAD CONTACT WITH FIRM. HAS TEMPLESMAN REP CONTACTED GOG?
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Case Number: n/a
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